



# Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

## **Improve and Enhance Public Transportation for Idahoans with Developmental and Other Disabilities**

### **Application for Funding**

The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities is established in state and federal law to advocate on behalf of Idahoans with developmental disabilities and their families to increase the capacity of and improve the system of services they receive. The Council's work is guided by a five-year strategic plan that outlines the goals and strategies that assist the Council in meeting its statutory requirements. The current plan includes the following goal:

**People with developmental disabilities have  
affordable and accessible transportation**

And the following outcome:

**Communities provide accessible and affordable  
public transportation to their citizens [with disabilities].**

This goal was emphasized when, on February 5, 2007, people with disabilities from across Idaho participated in a workshop to discuss and recommend changes that would increase access to transportation for persons with disabilities. In that meeting, the lack of adequate (or any) transportation was identified as a significant barrier to community integration for Idahoans with disabilities.

To meet the above goal and outcome and in response to this overwhelmingly underserved or unmet need, the Council has funding available to coordinate existing public transportation services and encourage the development of new and/or expanded transportation resources to meet the needs of people with developmental and other disabilities.

Recent federal initiatives and laws are encouraging this coordinated approach. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) which was signed into law in August of 2005, requires collaboration in planning and service system design for recipients to receive federal transportation funds. The New Freedom Initiative, in particular, emphasizes the importance of diverse groups working together to meet the transportation needs of people with disabilities in order for them to live successful lives included in their communities. These funds must be matched with local funds. Council funds could be used toward this match.

## **Scope of Work:**

1. **Identify an Area of Unmet Transportation Needs:** In collaboration with interested stakeholders, including individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, identify an area (city, county, geographical region, etc.) where transportation needs, especially for those with disabilities, are not being met. For that geographical area
  - a) identify the various types of transportation services available and who provides these
  - b) identify the challenges and “gaps” in existing transportation services or any duplication of services
  - c) compare this to concentrated areas of origin, if any, and destination (large employers, government offices, schools/universities, shopping areas, etc.), particularly for people with disabilities.

A coordinated public transportation planning coalition may already exist in this same area or region and may include many or all of these stakeholders. This group may also have already documented evidence of need as required here.

2. **Identify options and collaborate on a plan.** Outline possible solutions to address the transportation gaps and shortages by
  - a) considering possible options that would fit with the geography and needs of the area’s citizens; these could include but not be limited to, developing or increasing fixed route services, employer vanpool services, dial-a-ride services, volunteer ride services, gas vouchers, taxi scrip, or bus passes. Implementing a brokerage model to coordinate these options may also be considered. (See Appendix A for information on various options)
  - b) prioritizing options based on local factors, including funding, vehicle availability, accessibility, current resources, organizational barriers, and citizen preferences
  - c) develop a strategy and timeline to implement one or more options
  - d) assign costs and responsibilities for implementation
  - e) combine this information into a plan of action
3. **Implement the plan and provide the service(s):** Carry out the strategies identified in the plan. For the Council, a key element of the plan will be the degree to which people with developmental disabilities are included in the plan development and the solutions and strategies proposed meet their identified transportation needs. Evidence documenting that involvement will be expected. Also key will be the identification of strategies to sustain the project after Council funding has ended.
4. **Gather and analyze outcomes:** As the plan is implemented and services offered/expanded, data must be gathered regarding the impact of the services. Data may include, but not be limited to increased rides for people with disabilities,

increased access to community activities, increased collaboration and decreased duplication, shared use of resources, etc. The plan should identify what data will be gathered but information regarding unintended consequences of the plan's implementation should also be documented and reported.

## **Required Information:**

1. **Qualifications of applicant:** Eligible entities may be local or regional governmental entities, regional planning organizations, regional transportation authorities (RTAs), non-profit organizations, centers for independent living, transportation providers or other groups knowledgeable about public transportation for people with disabilities.

The proposal must include a description of the applicant organization and the extent to which the organization has the capacity, expertise, and experience to accomplish the requirements of the proposal. In particular, does the applicant organization have experience in:

- a. Collaborating with others
- b. Involving, in a meaningful way, users of transportation services such as people with disabilities
- c. Demonstrating knowledge of public transportation services and needs in the affected area
- d. Successfully managing projects of a similar nature and/or scope, keeping within timelines and budget

2. **Response to scope of work**

- a. Describe how each element of the scope of work will be accomplished and by whom
- b. Identify how stakeholders, particularly people with developmental disabilities, will be involved in the project.
- c. Provide a timeline or schedule of task completion (preferably in Excel format)
- d. Provide a written plan that includes current services, barrier identification, and proposed solutions to meet the diverse transportation needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- e. Implement the plan/initiate the services, monitor their provision, and gather and analyze data, and report results to the Council.

3. **Cost/budget:** Provide a proposed project budget specifying the following:

- a. Planned use of Council funds (Funds may be used to support any aspects of the scope of work and may also be used as match for federal public transportation funds sought through this effort)
- b. Cash and/or in-kind contributions and their source (these funds must equal 25% of the Council's funds)
- c. No more than 10% of the funds may be used for indirect costs for the applicant organization.

The budget for this project should be reasonable in amount to achieve the elements outlined in the scope work.

The Council on Developmental Disabilities has up to \$23,000 available for this project. The following conditions apply:

- The Council reserves the right to negotiate final grant amounts
- Funds are available on a reimbursement basis and must be contracted by September 1, 2007 and expended by September 15, 2008
- Additional funds may be available in subsequent years depending upon funding availability and project outcomes
- Preference will be shown for those proposals that include rural or frontier areas
- Since collaboration is key, applicants should seek to involve all possible partners within a geographic area; **multiple applications from the same area will be construed as lacking in collaboration**

The following documents are included as an Appendix to this request for the purposes of technical assistance:

A. Models of Rural Transportation for People with Disabilities: Rural Practice Guideline, Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities, University of Montana Rural Institute, February 2007

B. Let's Make History, Idaho Statewide Conference on Independent Living, Transportation Planning Session Results and Recommendations, February 5, 2007

Technical assistance for applicants may also be found at:

<http://www.unitedweride.gov/>  
<http://itd.idaho.gov/PublicTransportation/refer.htm>  
<http://www.fta.dot.gov/research.html>  
<http://www.piercecountyrides.com/>

Applicants should submit their proposals, with a cover letter including the following:

- ✓ Applicant organization name
- ✓ Type of organization
- ✓ Primary contact/phone number/fax/email
- ✓ Mailing address
- ✓ Total amount of funds requested

Applications must be received in the office of the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, 802 West Bannock St., Suite 308, Boise, ID 83702. by **5:00 pm Mountain Time, Friday, July 20, 2007**. Applications may be sent via regular mail to the above address, by email to [msword@icdd.idaho.gov](mailto:msword@icdd.idaho.gov), or by fax to Marilyn Sword at 208-334-3417.

Applications will be evaluated and points will be awarded on the basis of information provided through a written application. The application receiving the highest score will be recommended for funding. The successful application will be notified by Friday, August 17, 2007.

Please direct any questions to Marilyn Sword at the Council office at 1-208-334-2178 or 1-800-544-2433.

# Models of Rural Transportation for People with Disabilities

## Rural Practice Guideline

### Appendix A

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**Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities (RTC: Rural)**  
The University of Montana Rural Institute

February, 2007

The most recent Transportation Act, the “Safe, Accountable, Efficient, Flexible Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU), was signed into law in 2005. It guides transportation policy and funding through 2009, and provides opportunities to demonstrate innovative transportation solutions for people with disabilities living in rural areas. Section 5317, the “New Freedom Program”, allocates \$78 million to states for demonstration projects that “go beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act.” That is, transportation providers cannot use these funds to meet their existing ADA obligations. Section 5311c allocates funding for transportation on Indian reservations.

As providers begin to develop new programs in response to SAFETEA-LU, it is important that they first consider the models that have emerged over the past several years. Rural transportation models fall into several categories: (1) public transit, (2) agency-focused, (2) cooperatives, (3) volunteer/voucher, (4) public-private partnerships, and (5) personal ownership.

### Public Transportation Models

Most urban communities, many larger rural communities, and some small rural communities have public transportation systems. Often, these are funded by Section 5307 “Urbanized Area Formula Grants” or Section 5311 “Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas”. These systems serve the general public without restriction and are typically organized in one of three models:

**Fixed-route services:** This is the familiar “bus route” in which a vehicle, usually a bus, travels a consistent path, stopping at specific locations at scheduled times one or more days each week. This model can be efficient in communities with dense populations and large numbers of people who have easy access to routes. A fixed-route system meets the needs of people with disabilities if its: 1). vehicles, bus stops, and routes to bus stops are accessible; 2). equipment is in good working order; and 3). drivers are properly trained.

**Demand-response services:** Sometimes called “Dial-a-Ride”, this model resembles a taxi service. A rider calls a provider to schedule pick-up at the rider’s location and transportation to a destination. Rides may be convenient but riders often must call well in advance. Those who call too late may be denied a ride because the schedule for a

particular day or time is already established. While this model is very flexible, it is susceptible to schedule disruptions. If a scheduled rider is delayed or takes longer to enter the vehicle than anticipated, the rest of that day's schedule is affected. Although it is flexible, this system often generates complaints.

**Deviated fixed-route services:** This model is a hybrid of fixed-route and demand-response services. A bus or van makes scheduled stops and adheres to a timetable, but can alter its course between stops to go to a specific location for a pre-scheduled request. This is often used in less densely populated communities with fewer transit vehicles. This model accommodates the distance from the individual's location or destination to the route, so may be particularly helpful for riders with disabilities. However, the overall schedule must be maintained, so such accommodations may be limited.

## **Agency-focused Models**

Agency-focused models may provide specialized services or may serve the general public, including individuals with disabilities. Agency-focused models include:

**Specialized transit models:** Since the late 1970s, state Section 5310 "Formula Grants for Special Needs of Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities" have been available to community service agencies such as senior centers and disability service providers. Although this program continues to evolve and become more flexible, it specifically targets transportation for elderly people and people with disabilities where other transportation is unavailable, inadequate, or inappropriate. Agencies typically use Section 5310 funds to buy vehicles to transport their clients between home and agency programs and services. Implemented by states in many different ways, this approach provides limited transportation services. Many advocates' efforts have focused on increasing cooperation between agencies (See Cooperative Models).

## **Cooperative Models**

Cooperative models are specialized, agency-focused transportation programs which work together to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and scope of their services. They have properties of both the specialized transportation agency model and the public transportation model.

**Coordinated services:** Local human service agencies that own and operate vehicles work together to develop local plans, and may pool purchases of fuel and maintenance services. Coordinated services include:

**Brokerages:** Local human service agencies that provide transportation to their clients coordinate schedules and rides with other agencies to maximize efficiency. For example, they may agree to transport clients of participating agencies who live near their own clients and have relatively close destinations.

**Consolidated services:** Local agencies with vehicles work together to form an independent entity to provide transit services. The participating agencies "give" their vehicles to the new entity and pay the new entity for transporting their clients.

Consolidated services, the most advanced form of the cooperative model, may also transport the general public.

## **Volunteer and Voucher Models**

In many locations, publicly supported transportation services are insufficient or unavailable. Some communities address these gaps by organizing available local resources. Examples of volunteer and voucher models include:

**Volunteer systems:** These systems may be operated by a non-profit organization, a public agency (e.g., Veterans Administration), or faith communities. Volunteers with vehicles agree to provide rides, and may be reimbursed a limited amount. A volunteer corps may be a community's only source of "public" transportation, may focus on specific groups, or may supplement other existing services.

**Community Inclusion Drivers:** This Easter Seals Project Action program matches volunteer drivers with individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is a well-structured model that provides for driver training and oversight.

**Voucher models:** Voucher models provide resources directly to individuals with disabilities who then purchase their own transportation. There are no restrictions on destination, but individuals must arrange their own rides. A sponsoring agency may help participants develop personalized transportation plans that identify transportation providers such as public transit, taxi services, agency providers, and volunteer drivers. Vouchers are sometimes called "user-side subsidies".

## **Public-Private Partnerships**

**Taxi coupon models:** Coupon programs are a type of voucher model. Individuals receive coupons from a sponsoring agency that can be used only for a local taxi service. The traveler's destination may or may not be restricted, depending on the funding agency's policy.

**Personal Ownership:** Most individuals in the U.S. travel in personal vehicles, regardless of the public transportation models available in their communities. For low-income individuals, buying and maintaining a vehicle can be a particularly costly way to travel.

Individuals who have mobility impairments and live in rural and remote communities may need accessible personal vehicles to get where they need to go. Some qualified individuals have bought accessible vehicles under the Social Security Administration's "Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)" but there is no standard procedure for doing this.

Several U.S. communities have programs that make donated vehicles road-worthy and provide them to eligible individuals free or at a low cost. Disability advocates have considered this for providing accessible vehicles, but no such program has been demonstrated or evaluated yet.

## **Issues**



**Liability:** Liability is often proposed as a major obstacle to organizing, delivering, and providing transportation services. There are several ways to address this issue. For example, in April, 2006, Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman approved LB 1069, “Change to Regulated Motor Carrier Provisions Relating to Transportation of Certain Persons” (2006, Committee on Transportation & Telecommunications). This act allows a person eligible for transportation aid from Nebraska Health and Human Services to choose a non-labile family member to provide transportation. The department reimburses transportation costs at the state employee rate.

## **Resources:**

Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living: <http://www.april-rural.org>  
Gonzales, L., Stombaugh, D., Seekins, T. & Kasnitz, D. (2006). *Toolkit for Operating a Rural Transportation Voucher Program*. [Book & Disk]. Kent, OH: Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living.

Community Transportation Association of America: *Public and Community Transportation Glossary*. Retrieved February 28, 2007, from <http://www.ctaa.org/glossary/>

Easter Seals Project Action: <http://projectaction.easterseals.com>. Resources include:  
1. (2002/2001). *The Community Inclusion Driver Strategy: Assisting People with Disabilities Living in Rural Areas in Finding Personal Transportation*. Developed from University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies' & Jackson State University Mississippi Center for Technology Transfer's *Filling the Gap: A Strategy for Enhancing Traditional Community Transportation for People with Disabilities*. Retrieved February 21, 2007, from <http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/DocServer/01CID.pdf?docID=3425>

2. TranSystems Corp., RLS & Assoc., & Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Assoc. (2006, August). *Transportation Services for People with Disabilities in Rural and Small Urban Communities*. Washington, DC: Easter Seals Project Action. Retrieved February 21, 2007, from [http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/DocServer/Rural\\_Solutions\\_Summary\\_Report.pdf?docID=31023](http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/DocServer/Rural_Solutions_Summary_Report.pdf?docID=31023) (Provides examples of promising practices and detailed case studies of exemplary programs)

Nebraska Legislature: Committee on Transportation & Telecommunications, 99th Legislature, Second Session. (2006). *Summary of Legislation Referred to the Committee*, p. 20. Lincoln, NE. Retrieved February 21, 2007, from <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/L3780/B003-2006.pdf>

Social Security Administration: (2004, February). *Working while Disabled – A Guide to Plans for Achieving Self-Support*. (SSA electronic leaflet No. 05-10007, ICN 451453). Retrieved February 21, 2007, from <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/11017.html>

U.S. Department of Transportation: P.L. 109-59: *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users*, 23 USC § 502. (2005). Retrieved February 21, 2007, from <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/>



U.S. Department of Transportation & U.S. Department of Agriculture: Stommes, E. & Koeneman, J. (2006, July 12). *Transportation Toolbox for Rural Areas and Small Communities*. Washington, DC: USDOT & USDA. Retrieved February 21, 2007, from <http://ntl.bts.gov/ruraltransport/toolbox/>

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**For more information, contact: Tom Seekins**, Director, Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities, The University of Montana Rural Institute: A Center for Excellence in Disability Education, Research and Services, 52 Corbin Hall, Missoula, MT 59812-7056; 888-268-2743 toll-free; 406-243-5467; 406-243-4200 TTY; 406-243-2349 (fax); [ruralinstitute@umt.edu](mailto:ruralinstitute@umt.edu) ; <http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu>

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# Let's Make History!

## A Statewide Conference on Independent Living for Idahoans with Disabilities

Boise Center on the Grove  
February 5, 2007

### Transportation Planning Session Results and Recommendations Appendix B

This report summarizes the discussion held among about 80 transportation advocates who attended the transportation planning session of the 2007 Idaho SILC conference. First, the report lists several web based resources individuals may want to use in pursuing important issues. Second, the report summarizes issues reported by participants. Third, it presents the goals expressed by participants in response to the issues raised. Finally, the report list a series of action participants proposed that could enhance transportation in Idaho. These actions are focused on the State and the local level.

Participants expressed interest in participating in several of the actions listed in the report. They also requested copies of the report be distributed to relevant staff of the Idaho Department of Transportation, relevant State legislators, and officials of regional transportation authorities. They also expressed interested in receiving copies for themselves.

It is important to note that this report attempts to convey the essence of the discussions during this planning session. Many details may not be conveyed and some important points may have been inadvertently omitted. Achieving the spirit of the discussion will require a continuing dialog and a great deal of work on the part of many.

#### **Transportation Resources on the Web:**

<http://ITD.Idhaho.gov/publictransportation>

<http://CTAA.org>.

<http://www.unitedweride.gov/>

<http://projectaction.easterseals.com>

<http://www.april-rural.org/>

<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umn.edu>

## **Transportation Problems Reported by Participants**

1. Days of service are typically limited to Monday through Friday. While these correspond to the business and work week, this leaves a major gap in transportation on Saturdays and Sundays.
2. Similarly, there is rarely public transportation available after 7:00PM. For those who work past that time, a walk home can be a difficult, frightening, and dangerous.
3. While some areas have taxi cabs that may fill the void, these are often quite expensive. Moreover, cabs are rarely accessible for those who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs.
4. Compounding the lack of transportation, some human service programs – including some medical and social security offices – are not located on transportation lines.
5. When public transportation (e.g., demand response systems) is available, some participants reported that they must schedule a ride as much as a week in advance.
6. Participants reported that some communities have no public transportation at all.
7. Several participants complained that they could not reach call centers (for medical transportation) and that when they did respond, customer service was not responsive. These participants reported that, even when they scheduled rides, they were unreliable. Others reported that they had no one at all to call for the rides they needed. All this resulted in missed medical appointments.
8. Several participants reported that since the reimbursement rate for Medicaid transportation has been cut, service had noticeably declined.
9. Other participants reported that there were no accessible vehicles available in the fleet of vehicles used in the public system in their area. Several expressed concern that available vehicles were old and expressed concern about their safety.
10. One participant raised the point that several streets were not adequately maintained in the winter; leaving streets to some houses impassable by van services.
11. Several participants raised questions about the sale of accessible vehicles after exceeding their useful life defined by the State. Specifically, they wanted to know why those couldn't be sold to individuals who could benefit by owning an accessible vehicle.

12. Many participants expressed dismay that accessible vehicles in some areas seemed to sit idly and at the same time agencies refused to provide service to people who needed a ride.

### **Vision and Goals for Transportation Expressed by Participants**

1. Participants expressed a strong and repeated desire to see the available transportation resources coordinated in a way to expand transportation services. This included locally coordinated programs that involved vehicles owned by various local service programs (e.g., senior services), the organization and use of volunteers, the engagement of the faith communities, mechanisms for neighbors sharing rides with neighbors, and the involvement of other transportation providers (e.g., universities, taxi cab companies, automobile renting companies, etc.) organizing to meet a community's needs.
2. There was also a desire to see more coordination of efforts at the State level across agencies. One participant described the way she and her friends share things and wondered why the State and local agencies couldn't do the same.
3. Several participants expressed a vision of a program that provided funding for purchasing accessible vehicles or for modifying vehicles (publicly and privately owned) to make them accessible. Others stated an expectation that the State would only support transportation that is fully accessible.
4. Others expressed concerns that government services were not the only solution but rather government should help residents and communities create ways to help themselves. This could be done through various volunteer and ridesharing programs, and even entrepreneurial approaches such as one person who owns an accessible vehicle providing accessible rides to others.
5. Several participants described a vision in which all available transportation and rides were scheduled through an integrated mechanism rather than separate agencies.
6. Most participants expressed support for the idea that more resources were needed for public transportation in Idaho.

### **Proposed Action at the State Level**

1. Strengthen policies, regulations, and guidelines that lead to greater coordination and efficient use of public transportation resources (i.e., vehicles) at the local level.
2. Strengthen expectations that all vehicles used in publicly supported transportation services be accessible.
3. Support the development of the "one-call-stop" centers for transportation scheduling.

4. Increase State appropriations for transportation services through appropriations. Transportation advocates should become more flexible and be willing to accept allocations without dedicated funding sources.
5. Disability advocates should work with the Community Transportation Association of Idaho to organize and conduct a legislative public transportation day in which State legislators commit to using only public transportation. This could be done both during a session or while they are at home in their districts.
6. The legislature might consider a tax credit for taxi cab companies who purchase and operate accessible vans; thus, spurring business and accessibility.
7. A State agency should take more responsibility for guiding the direction of vehicle recycling programs. In particular, they should exert more direction in the disposition of publicly owned accessible vehicles that reach the end of the “useful life” so that they are first made available to individuals with disabilities. Similarly, such a program could help develop funding to support vehicle modifications of recycled (i.e., used and donated) vehicles.
8. A group (of consumer advocates) should be organized at the State level to monitor the activities of state and local agencies, monitor complaints, and provide support where needed.
9. Finally, the State agency should explore more Federal funding for intelligent transportation systems that can improve the efficiency with which other resources are used.

#### **Proposed Actions at the Local Level**

1. There is ample evidence that coordinated local systems can expand the amount of transportation available without increased funding. Local systems could incorporate the use of vouchers and volunteers, as well as vehicles from school systems (e.g., elementary, secondary, and colleges). Faith based organizations should be included in coordinated systems in the role of providers and recipients.
2. Local organizers should develop methods for ride sharing.
3. Local organizers should develop funds to support the modification of vehicles.
4. Local agencies who service people with disabilities should conduct marketing programs designed to increase ridership, including training in how to use fixed route systems.
5. Fixed route transportation providers should consider offering free rides to people with disabilities who use the fixed routes rather than placing demands on the para-transit systems. When those who can use the fixed route system

do so, more para-transit is available to those who cannot use the fixed route systems.

6. Local agencies might implement vehicle re-cycling programs to make used and “retired” vehicles available to those who can use them.
7. Local public transit agencies might consider installing digital cameras designed to record the events in public vehicles to provide some increase measure of safety and to offer information that would allow post-incidence reviews.
8. Local groups should explore the opportunities for developing accessible transportation cooperatives. These could take several forms but would generally involve a group of individuals owning or sharing in the use of an accessible vehicle. This may particularly appropriate in rural areas where public transportation services are difficult to provide because of the scarcity of population and distances involved.